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Mrs. Winn

of

Japan and Manchuria

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By REV. T. C. WINN, D. D.

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We have all seen photographs of absent loved ones and thought that they were good. But never did any one see in the best photograph, the beauty of soul which shone from the dear face and eyes.

In returning home this time, I came convinced that I could render no better service to those who heard me than to tell them something of the one I knew and loved the best of all.

I feel, however, that my best word-portrait will fall far short of being a true picture of the real achievements of that life of faith.

Lila C. Winn was a woman who did not know the meaning of selfishness. Such a feeling I verily believe never had a place in her heart. Her thoughts and plans were always for others. She unfailingly devoted her effort and labor to the help and good of those within her reach. She was devoted in mind and body to every good thing possible of accomplishment. And it was always the marvel of those who knew her that she could accomplish so much. She was always finding good deeds to perform where others were idle. They were idle because they did not see any thing to do, or any thing they thought they could do. Her eyes and heart instinctively saw the needs of oth-

ers. And her hands and feet, impelled by love, set about supplying those needs.

As I was passing through Osaka, on my way home in May, a friend upon whom I called, then living in the house we formerly occupied, recalled to me some instances which I perhaps never thought of except as a matter of course in her life. The friend said, "I came here on an errand one day, and I found to my surprise Mrs. Winn washing and binding up the sore leg of a poor coolie she had met on the streets and persuaded to come home with her that she might thus minister to him." She also said, "I can never forget what I once witnessed in this front hall. I walked into the open door unexpectedly to Mrs. Winn and there I saw her down on her knees praying for a Japanese woman whom she had apparently been teaching, and it seemed as though she could not let the woman go until she believed on the Savior."

Her sympathy was not restricted to the lowly. Those in high and even highest circles were objects of her love, and for their best welfare her efforts were put forth. She never hesitated to seek out those who would naturally think themselves rich and in need of nothing, and try to minister to their spiritual good.

These things, which are only examples of her unremittent service rendered to others, witness to the fact that she never thought of saving her life; nor seemed to be conscious that she lost it for others' sake!

She was a diligent woman, ever working up to the limit of her physical powers. The day when she was most suddenly called away, I felt that she had literally worn herself out. Her powers had

been exhausted by her incessant labors. She was never, almost literally never, known to sit down for idle chat and conversation as many of us frequently do. If not too tired, and tired she seldom acknowledged that she was, some useful work employed her busy fingers. Few persons are as unceasingly busy while engaged in social conversation, as she was. That social chat was ever made the opportunity of introducing something religious and helpful to faith and joy in the Lord. While I would be thinking out the best way of approach to a caller's heart, it often happened that she would introduce the subject in a most natural and tactful manner, so that the conversation easily turned in that direction. Religious things formed the subject upon which she could talk more easily than upon almost any other. It is what her heart was full of and out of its abundance she spoke.

When travelling to Mission Meeting one summer, we had an hour to wait at a station. When she found that out she said she wanted to make a call on a young man and his parents. He was sick and she would surely find them all at home. The young man, formerly her Sunday school scholar, had finished the grammar school. It was borne in upon her heart that she ought to encourage him to study for the Christian ministry. She was back on time as promised, and had made a sincere effort to help one more see his duty and privilege. Later, word came that that exhortation had enabled parents and son to dedicate his life to the Gospel ministry. Here is illustration of being zealous in season and out of season, which was unceasingly exemplified by her. Scarcely a day

was allowed to pass, without trying to save or bless some souls.

She was a good Bible student and knew the Scriptures well. It was generally possible for her to turn to any passage she wished. When a girl yet in her teens, she read aloud to her grandmother whose eyes were dim, most if not all of Scott's Commentary. That exercise fixed in her memory a large amount of Bible knowledge which was ready at call for her use. Many of her explanations of Bible texts were original and elucidating. Her thoughts about the sacred Book were beautiful and instructive. These ideas expressed her experience of the truths she taught, and gave them a singular power as uttered by her. I received a series of resolutions which were passed by the W. C. T. U. ladies at their annual summer meeting this year (1913). Those resolutions ended with the statement that they were sent:

"Remembering with loving appreciation the interest Mrs. T. C. Winn always shared in the work of this society, and having felt the spiritual power she exercised over those with whom she came in contact, with special thought of the helpful devotional service," (a Bible reading), "she led here a year ago."

She was sociable and took the greatest pleasure in showing hospitality. It was done with such grace and kindliness that the most timid was won to her. Our home was a place to which all classes were welcomed and loved to come. Many have found it to be an example of a true home. It was because of the little woman who presided over her house in such a Christ-like spirit.

Just one month after we had laid the dear form

away to await the resurrection, a young lady missionary on her way to Chefoo called at my door and asked if Mrs. Winn was at home. She said she had received the kindest care from Mrs. Winn when landing an entire stranger in Dairen a year or two before, and she wanted to come around with her husband to give expression to her gratitude.

Here is a tribute from the necrological report of the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Missions:

"Without undue reflection on any one, we may still properly say that there are ideal missionary homes, ideal missionary wives, and ideal missionary mothers. The members of the council will agree that Mrs. Winn attained the ideal in a degree permitted to few; and her example, the example of the home of which she was the center, may well be a stimulus to us all to strive for the very best things and the highest."

From very early years, she was a personal worker and soul winner. After hearing of her death, a friend wrote: "Lila used to talk to me and try to get me to become a Christian when we were children together in the primary school. I think that was her life."

The mission to which she belonged made this entry upon its minutes: "Resolved, That the Mission puts on record its deep sense of loss in the death of Mrs. T. C. Winn and its appreciation of the qualities of heart and mind which made of her a missionary above our power to praise. She turned many to righteousness and she will shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever. We offer to her bereaved hus-

band and children the heartfelt sympathy of a mission which admired and loved her, and which will never cease to remember the example she has set of a follower of Christ who pleased not herself and was ever in her work as one who served." What follows is an extract from the Board's letter:

"Mrs. Winn was a graduate of Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, a woman of disciplined and cultured mind, of unusual attractiveness of personality, of a nature so loving that it drew all about her into her friendship, of great skill and tact in dealing with those for whom she was working, and of such kindliness and good sense that her presence was counted a great blessing in any mission station to which she might be assigned. In Dairen and throughout Manchuria she worked with unceasing energy among the Japanese to make Christ known to them; and to win them to faith in Christ and to the joy and strength of Christian discipleship was her one absorbing endeavor."

Wherever duty took her; even in the market place and shop, among callers and trades people who came only to the door, very few who came in contact with her failed to receive some message about what was the dearest subject to her heart—the love of God for sinful men.

In my mind, these words were always associated with her, "He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." It was because she sowed beside all waters, "the good seed which is the word of God," that the things which I've quoted could be said of her by her Mission and Board.

She was unceasingly visiting homes and hospitals to carry delicacies as well as to read the Word

of God and to sing hymns for the comfort and cheer of the inmates. I have a photograph taken of her as she stood beside the bicycle on which she daily went around the city to minister physical and spiritual gifts alike. She did not ride for the mental or bodily enjoyment of it, but because she was enabled by it to accomplish so much more than would otherwise have been possible. She and her bicycle were familiar objects in every part of the city.

Mrs. Winn's personality was attractive. She could gather people around her in a wonderful way and hold them while the story of salvation was presented to them. Many have been the times when I sat in my study and listened, while in another part of the house she kept a room full of women convulsed with laughter at her witticisms as she was demonstrating something in cooking or fancy work. This was only preparatory to teaching them the Bible lesson she had chosen for the day. At her funeral a man representing one of the groups of Christians in the country spoke of this fact. He said it had impressed itself upon his mind. At times, he remarked, it was difficult to understand what she said, (she was not what is called a good speaker of Japanese), but yet people would gather to hear her. "If I should talk in that way," he said, "people would run away from me. Instead of being attracted they would be repelled; and yet they would gladly come to hear her."

Here let it be added, that in an emergency she could be relied upon to take charge of almost any kind of service that might be lacking a leader. She was seldom at a loss for a Bible subject upon

which to speak, but in a marked degree, verified the Savior's words: "He that believeth on me, from within him shall flow rivers of living water."

In her work she was resourceful. She was not restricted to set ways of doing things, but was inventive of new methods. Moreover there was little in the way of womanly accomplishments at which she was not an adept. Our children's clothes were most of them her handiwork. All four of them were fitted by her for the High School before they returned to this country to complete their education. The forenoons were given to their class room work, while the afternoons were devoted to such activities as I have hinted at.

During the last two years of her life we were more than ever engaged in touring together. May I give you an idea of how she spent her time on one of those tours? The first place at which we stopped would be thirty to sixty miles away. Arriving there, two or three meetings were the order; one for women, one for children and the third for a mixed audience of men and women.

Alighting from the train, the dear woman would begin her activities at once. Calls were made to invite people to the meetings. Things were bought, by herself often, for the cooking class. If no cooking class was to be held, the time on the cars had been occupied by making sample pieces of knitting or crocheting which the class was to be taught. She did this kind of work which taxed her physically, because she believed a knowledge of these things added to the comfort of families, (and we had proof of it), and because by teaching them, many women were reached who would not be in any other way. After a most strenuous hour or

hour and a half at the woman's meeting, she would hasten to the children's class—a Sunday school on a week day. To these children her best efforts would be given in teaching them Bible verses and hymns. Her aim with children was to get them to memorize Bible texts and hymns; fully believing that truth thus implanted in the heart would bring forth fruit in the life. At the end of these two meetings there were generally some who were called upon, in order to teach or exhort them. Then came our supper, consisting of what our lunch baskets supplied. Before time for the evening meeting, a few minutes were snatched for rest. At the preaching service her duty was to take care of the music. Generally the day closed with a social time when religious and other subjects were talked over. To reach the next place on our journey might require an all night's ride on the cars, or only until two or three hours past midnight. In the latter case the journey would be interrupted and a pallet on the floor in a Japanese house would be sought, where the night's rest would be finished. This program with some variation was followed from Monday till Saturday, twice a month. In all these experiences and circumstances her spirit was serene and sweet. Her heart overflowed with gladness because these things could be done in Jesus' Name.

This highest of all purposes had absolute mastery of her affections and powers; and all she had was consecrated to it.

She could say, "This one thing I do." And it required a very serious thing to prove a hindrance or interruption of what she had planned to attempt. Moreover, she never acknowledged defeat. If oth-

ers thought her worsted she would not believe it. If insurmountable difficulties rose to block her way, she would, so to speak, calmly walk around them and proceed unperturbed on her course.

When a little girl she had made up her mind to be a missionary to the heathen. But she thought that being a missionary involved being burned at the stake. I have heard her happy laugh at the ludicrousness of her childhood thoughts, as she told me that she used to open the door of her mother's heated oven and put her hand in and hold it there to see if she could endure the pain of being burned alive! But notwithstanding her belief as to what it meant, she was not moved from her determination to be a missionary.

Once she was attacked by a painful eye disease. The doctor came to treat her and found it necessary to tightly bandage her eyes and shut out all the light for a time. During those days we supposed of course she would rest and be quiet at home. But no such thought was hers, and meet her engagements she would! She had a jinrikisha called, and to the coolie who pulled it she entrusted herself, while she directed him where to take her. In this way she conducted meetings, and went about calling from house to house, probably. At two different times she was seriously hurt upon the streets of Osaka by collision with rapidly moving jinrikishas. Both times the family doctor put her to bed, but she refused to stay there and went on with her service to which love constrained her, enduring much suffering the while.

Since she has gone, the many, many letters of condolence that came from Europeans, and the

sayings of the Japanese, agreed in showing the very highest regard for her: "Thank you very much for writing about Mrs. Winn's falling asleep. It was not a bit like death, was it? Just like a child who has grown so tired and weary, holding out to the last ounce of strength and then giving up without a struggle, and being carried off to sleep and rest. One does not sorrow deeply for Mrs. Winn. We are just glad that her reward was so great, her home-going was so painless, her coronation so gloriously victorious."

"Her life has been a constant inspiration to me, and when I have been tired and tempted, and when I have been disappointed in my fellow workers and have all but thought the effort was not worth while, times and times without number Mrs. Winn's beautiful life of unswerving and of untiring devotion has come to my mind, and I have been helped to go on in the struggle."

"One of the pleasantest recollections of my editorship of the 'Messenger' (a little paper in Japan) is the reception of a couple of manuscripts from Mrs. Winn's pen. They were so clearly expressed, so beautifully written and evidently the expression of a devout and consecrated spirit, that they made a strong impression upon me as they passed through my hands."

"The funeral of Mrs. Winn taught me it was time for us not to think of limitations, but of possibilities. Her strong faith, her power in prayer, her quietness of spirit, even under the most provoking circumstances, the multitude of souls she won for the Master, all say: 'There are no limitations to one of her faith and consecration!' "

And now I am sure you will want to listen to

some tributes from the Japanese. This is from a young woman to whom a very real service had been rendered:

"This evening when I came back from a meeting, Miss Smith called me to her study and with a pale look she told me that she had a very sad news. But how could I dream that it was such a sad, surprising one! I have never seen Mrs. Winn, yet my heart yearns her dearly. I am so sorry to think that my negligence has robbed me of the last chance to express my hearty gratitudes to her for her loving kindnesses to me and for what she has done for our people groping in the darkness. I feel though one of the shining lights of this dark world is quenched too soon."

One of our Japanese teachers said recently:

"I was traveling alone several years ago and was very hot and tired and without lunch. Mrs. Winn did not know me, yet she realized my condition and opened her lunch basket and insisted upon sharing its contents with me. Such kinds I had never before experienced nor can I forget it."

The first sense of any comfort that crept into my heart after my agonizing sorrow befell me, was in listening to what the Japanese were saying about her. I discovered that they had rightly judged her character, and they understood and appreciated her far beyond anything I had supposed was possible.

You no doubt have read of the unprecedented action of the Japanese in trying to honor her memory.

The things I am about to describe, come from their grateful feelings which were expressed with sobs and tears, as they repeatedly said: "She was

a benefactor of our country; she spent her life for our people; she died for us in Manchuria."

As soon as the sad news reached Dairen, the Vice-President of the South Manchuria Railway sent me a long telegram of condolence and sorrow. A special car was sent for my use in returning to Dairen; and Christian officials were appointed to accompany me. A short funeral service was requested before her body went from Sen Kin Sai, where she laid down her life. A tent was erected for the purpose, and all the highest officials and their wives were in attendance to show their respect and grief. Most of the women had been earnestly taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and prayed for and with, by her who now lay lifeless before them.

I began the long sad journey at about 7 p. m. The Christians sang a hymn as the train moved out of the station, quite a number of them going with me to the junction, thirty-one miles away.

After leaving that place where a company met the train, I had no thought of any further demonstrations of this kind. But all through the night and early morning hours, groups of people came to mingle their tears with mine and unite their voices in prayer.

At a station sixty-five miles from Dairen, a number of friends had come out to return with me from that point. From that on, others joined the company at different places, till my private car was filled.

All that night through she had a triumphal procession. It seemed to me nothing less than that.

At Dairen, I found that committees had been appointed to look after every detail of preparation

for the last sad rites, and that a very special friend of ours was the chairman of them all. Concerning everything, my own and my children's wishes were followed, and all arrangements were beautifully carried out. One of the richest men in Manchuria who had recently become a Christian, printed five hundred copies of her photograph and gave them to friends throughout that province. So that wherever I go now, I find her picture occupying the honored place in the guest room.

To our great surprise they begged to be allowed to bear the funeral expenses and make it a church or state funeral. For the non-Christian community shared in it. A representative of the Mission expressed the feeling of us all when he said it was a funeral "befitting a queen."

Later as I was about to begin the erection of a monument at her grave, they came and asked the privilege of bearing the responsibility and expenses of this labor of love, and to publish a biography of her. It has all been too wonderful for me to properly describe the love they showed for her.

This fragmentary recital is altogether inadequate to rightly set forth the life and character of which I am speaking. But, you have heard enough to convince you that the beauty of the Lord was upon her and that He established the work of her hands.

Such an outstanding fact as this life, must have had a cause. I once asked her: "Lila, how old were you when you became a Christian?" "Why," she replied, "I don't remember when I became a Christian. I think I was born a Christian." On another occasion when we were talking together of having more of the Spirit's power manifested in our work, I said, "I think you are filled with the Spirit,

and have always thought so." Whenever I have remembered her pleased surprise at that remark, I have been glad that I made it! I sincerely believe that like John the Baptist, she was filled with the Spirit from her birth. The secret forces which moved her heart and will, were from above. From that source she ever sought and received gracious supply.

Her prayer-life was the most real one that I ever knew.

She was an early riser, and those early hours were spent in prayer. In order to have that time for communion with her Lord, she loved to be up before others were stirring. Her prayers were not a few words hastily uttered. She waited upon the Lord. She had a prayer list of persons which she daily spread before the Lord. Whenever it was possible she went to solitary places in the woods and upon the mountains, during those early hours, with her Bible, for prayer.

Often she came back from those places where she had been apart from all others, her face transfigured almost, as she whispered to me: "I found such a nice, beautiful place this morning!"

When the evening drew near the same longing to be at prayer took her away from others. If she was sought for, she was invariably found engaged in pleading with the Almighty Father. She loved "to steal awhile away from every cumbering care, and spend the hours of setting day in humble, grateful prayer."

We are looking for explanation for this life. Jesus explained it when He said:

"If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto

you." "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing."

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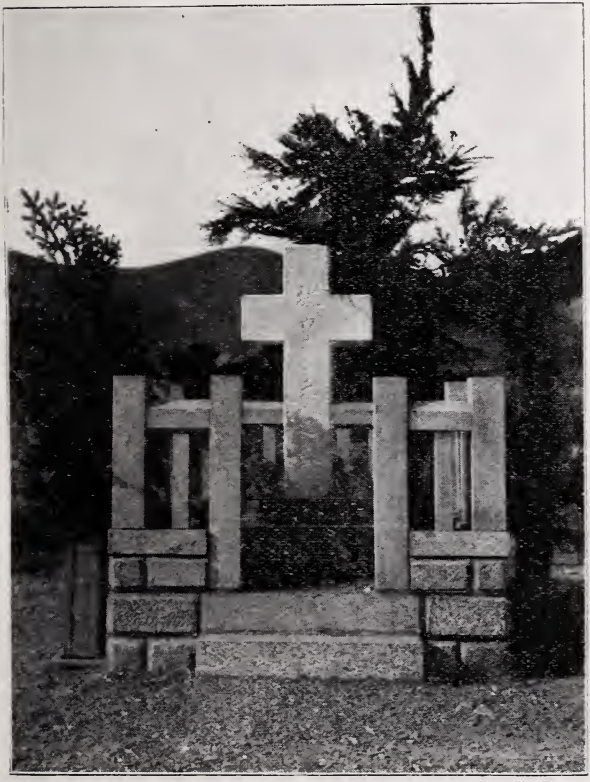

MONUMENT ERECTED TO MRS. WINN BY THE JAPANESE